

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BRIDGE 01540 052021Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-05 A-01 SS-15 MMO-01 SCA-01
INR-07 FBO-02 /047 W
-----060983 052028Z /65
P 051815Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3102

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRIDGETOWN 1540

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC, BB
SUBJECT: WITHDRAWAL OF MARINE GUARDS

REF STATE 154070

1. EMBASSY STAFF IS NOT OF ONE MIND ON WITHDRAWAL OF MARINE GUARDS. OFFICERS OF CONSULAR SECTION WOULD PREFER TO SEE MARINES REMAIN. THEY ARGUE THAT MARINES SERVE USEFUL FUNCTION BY TAKING OUT-OF-HOUR CALLS FROM US CITIZENS IN DISTRESS, VISA APPLICANTS WHOSE BUSINESS HAS SUDDENLY CALLED THEM TO US, ETC. THEY ALSO NOTE THAT THREE PEOPLE HAVE HAD TO BE EXPELLED FROM EMBASSY PREMISES IN LAST TWO MONTHS AND THAT FIRE IN AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE WHICH OCCURRED IN APRIL OF THIS YEAR CAUSED ONLY LIMITED DAMAGE BECAUSE MARINE ON DUTY DISCOVERED IT IN TIME. IN ADDITION, CONSUL GENERAL WOOLLONS POINTS OUT THAT WHEN WORD OF MARINES' WITHDRAWAL GETS OUT, POTENTIAL TERRORISTS FROM OUTSIDE MAY WELL TAKE NOTE OF FACT THAT EMBASSY HAS BEEN "UNCOVERED."

2. CHIEFS OF ADMINISTRATIVE, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SECTIONS AND I, WHILE ACCEPTING CONSULAR OFFICERS' ARGUMENTS AS AT LEAST PARTIALLY VALID, NEVERTHELESS DISAGREE WITH THEIR VIEW THAT MARINES SHOULD BE MAINTAINED IN PLACE. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT SERVICES RENDERED BY MARINES JUSTIFY COST OF THEIR MAINTENANCE.
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SAME ENDS COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED BY HIRING LOCAL SECURITY GUARDS, AND RECOURSE TO SUCH PROCEDURE WOULD NOT ONLY RESULT IN VERY CONSIDERABLE SAVING TO USG BUT ALSO REMOVE IRRITANT IN GOB-EMBASSY RELATIONS. (DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT GOB STRONGLY OPPOSED INTRODUCTION OF MARINES AND ONLY YIELDED AT LAST BECAUSE OF FORMER AMBASSADOR'S PERSISTENT IMPORTUNING OF MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.)

THOUGH MARINES HAVE BEHAVED WELL, SEVERAL BARBADIANS, INCLUDING LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, HAVE COMMENTED ADVERSELY ON THEIR BEING HERE, USUALLY TO THE EFFECT THAT THEIR PRESENCE SUGGESTS THAT BARBADOS IS A DANGEROUS PLACE AND THUS CREATES AN IMAGE INIMICAL TO THE PROMOTION OF THE ALL-IMPORTANT TOURIST INDUSTRY.

3. JUST BEFORE VISIT TO BARBADOS OF UNDER SECRETARY FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS, EMBASSY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER HAD SIGNED TWO-YEAR LEASE FOR NEW QUARTERS FOR MARINES, WHICH, HOWEVER, HAS CLAUSE PERMITTING CANCELLATION UPON 60 DAYS NOTICE. AS LEASE IS TO ENTER INTO EFFECT SEPTEMBER 15, WE NEED TO KNOW BY JULY 15 WHETHER OR NOT MARINES WILL BE WITHDRAWN.
SIMMS

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 05-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Executive Order: GS
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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SAS ID: 1971042
Secure: OPEN
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Subject: WITHDRAWAL OF MARINE GUARDS
TAGS: ASEC, BB
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3e2d5171-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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